



February 20, 2013

Appropriations Committee
Senator Toni Harp, co-chairman
Representative Toni Walker, co-chairman

RE: Governor's Bill 6350

1. Department of Economic and Community Development
2. Community Investment Act amended, Sec. 22. Subsection (a) of section 4-66aa of the general statutes

Testimony of Helen Higgins, Executive Director, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

My name is Helen Higgins, and I am Executive Director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. The Trust is Connecticut's non-profit statewide preservation organization, established by Special Act of the Connecticut General Assembly in 1975 (SA 93-75). It is committed to protecting and nourishing the vitality of significant buildings and landscapes through grants, loans, on-site technical preservation assistance, educational programs and publications.

I am testifying in favor of the Governor's proposed line item to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for \$199,896. These funds are used for Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants throughout the state. The amount proposed is a 20% cut from our original appropriation of \$250,000. Last year, our grants leveraged 2 times the amount awarded to non-profits and municipalities across the state for preservation planning projects that contribute to economic development and cultural heritage tourism. Over 100 short term jobs were created. This small state investment has wide impact and I hope you will agree it is worthy.

I am also testifying in opposition to amending the Community Investment Act (CIA) of 2005 (Sec. 22. Subsection (a) of section 4-66aa of the general statutes).

The amended language allows for funding for the Healthy Foods initiative of the State Department of Education to be included in Community Investment Act distributions. The Healthy Foods initiative is a wonderful and growing program that deserves funding. **Moving its funding source from the General Fund to the Community Investment Act program demonstrates disdain of the founding principles of CIA.** CIA funds are meant to protect and preserve smart land use. This means preserving open land and farmland, rural and urban centers. Moving Healthy Foods funding source to CIA will also result to a taking of funds from the current CIA programs, the majority of which funds are re-invested into our communities. For example, from September 2011 to September 2012, historic preservation grants using CIA funds totaled over \$4.8 million. 90% of these grants leveraged private investment. Cities like New London, New Haven, Norwalk, Stamford and Hartford benefitted. Towns like Stonington, Westbrook, New Canaan, Vernon, West Hartford, Woodstock, Litchfield, New Milford and on and on.

The proposed shift in use of CIA funds sets the terrible precedent that the significant revenue meant to protect our land, our historic places, our communities across the state can be cut into to fund programs unrelated to its original intent.